



Department of Justice

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**JACKSON DOCTOR, NURSE AND BUSINESSMAN
SENTENCED FOR MEDICARE KICKBACK SCHEME**

Jackson, Miss – Lonnie Walker, 63, and Dr. Earnest Rankin, 65, both of Jackson, and Sylvia Redd, 57, of Tallulah, Louisiana, were sentenced today by Senior U.S. District Judge Tom S. Lee for their roles in a scheme to pay kickbacks for the referral of motorized wheelchairs to Medicare beneficiaries, U.S. Attorney Gregory K. Davis and FBI Special Agent in Charge Daniel McMullen announced. Walker, a local businessman and former owner of Longwind Products and Services, and Redd, a nurse practitioner, were each sentenced to serve 15 months in federal prison. Dr. Rankin was sentenced to five years of probation. The defendants were ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$997,225.52.

Walker sold motorized wheelchairs from his business, Longwind Products and Services. Redd and Rankin received kickbacks from Walker for each Medicare beneficiary who was referred to Longwind with a prescription for a power wheelchair. Some of those referred to Walker were not even eligible to receive wheelchairs. Federal law makes it a crime for any person to give or to accept any type of payment in exchange for referring someone to a health care provider, or for a health care service, if Medicare is involved in the payment for the services.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Scott Gilbert and investigated by the United States Attorney's Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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